



**Missouri Commission for the
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A New Set of Flashing Hands at MCDHH



Kandice Allee

MCDHH is pleased to announce that Kandice Allee joined our staff on January 6, 2003 as our new Executive Assistant/Staff Interpreter. Kandice graduated from Johnson County Community College in 1993 with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Sign Language Interpreting, and has been a very busy working interpreter ever since. She has worked

as an interpreter for Johnson County Community College (1993-1994), the Whole Person (1994-1995), and the Missouri Department of Mental Health (1995-1996). In 1996 she co-founded SignLink, Inc., an interpreter referral agency located in Olathe, Kansas, and she operated that service on her own from 2000 through 2002. She holds a 5/5 certification in Kansas, has served on the Interpreter Advisory Committee for the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and is a KQAS evaluator for Kansas. She is certified at the Comprehensive level in the Missouri Interpreter Certification System. With her excellent interpreting skills, business and managerial experience, and smiling face, Kandice will be an outstanding addition to the MCDHH staff. We welcome her warmly and look forward to working with her.

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Training for Law Enforcement Officers

MCDHH is collaborating with the Missouri Deputy Sheriffs' Association (MDSA) to provide a series of training workshops for law enforcement officers this year. The series features presentations by Kim Davis, Kandice Allee, and Dr. Roy Miller of the MCDHH staff, as well as Marco Tapia, Executive Director of the MDSA. The series is titled "Officer, I Can't Hear You!" The first two workshops in this series were presented in Columbia (2/13/03) and Bloomfield (2/26/03), and future workshops are being scheduled for St. Louis, Kansas City, and Springfield.



*Law Enforcement Officers
Practice the Sign for "Jail"*

New Website and E-Mail Addresses

In the last issue of the MCDHH NEWS we announced a new, much simpler, and easier to remember address (URL) for our website, namely <www.mcdhh.state.mo.us>. We are pleased to be able to announce that the e-mail addresses for all of the MCDHH staff have now also been changed to be consistent with our website address. The new e-mail addresses for all MCDHH staff members are as follows:

Dr. Roy E. Miller -- Executive Director
remiller@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Mary Sheridan -- Executive Secretary
msherida@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Kandice Allee -- Executive Assistant/Staff Interpreter
kallee@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Amy Fowler -- MICS Coordinator
afowler@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Kim Davis -- Workshop/Training Specialist
kjedavis@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Donald Benfield -- Information/Media Specialist
dbenfiel@mcdhh.state.mo.us

Ameir Smith -- Senior Secretary
asmith1@mcdhh.state.mo.us

In addition, two general addresses have been created. Anyone who wants to send e-mail to the executive director of MCDHH but does not know the correct e-mail address can now simply send e-mail to <ExecDir@mcdhh.state.mo.us>. And anyone who does not know to whom their mail should be sent or directed can simply send their e-mail to <MCDHH@mcdhh.state.mo.us> and upon receipt it will be directed to the appropriate staff person. We hope that this simplified addressing system will be useful to everyone, and facilitate e-mail communication with the MCDHH staff.

Please Help MCDHH Reduce Costs

One can't pick up the newspaper these days without reading yet another story about the state of Missouri's dire financial situation -- both for the remainder of this fiscal year and for the 2004 fiscal year ahead. So it should come as no shock to anyone that MCDHH will be facing severe fiscal limitations during the coming months.

Last year the FY 2003 operations money of MCDHH was cut 20 percent by the Missouri legislature. This year MCDHH has been hit with almost disastrous withholdings from its appropriations by the Office of Administration as part of the Governor's efforts to finish this fiscal year with a balanced budget. When you combine the 20 percent cut in legislative appropriations with this year's withholdings by the Governor, it means that MCDHH has less than half the money that it was appropriated two years ago in order to carry out its operations. Clearly we cannot continue to offer the same services and programs that we offered two years ago when our operations budget has effectively been cut in half.

So, we are asking for your help with the funding for one of our most important services. Every **MCDHH NEWS** that we send out costs the office almost 50 cents (cost of postage plus printing). We can reduce these expenses significantly if everyone that has e-mail access were to allow us to e-mail the **MCDHH NEWS** to them instead of sending it in hardcopy form through the United States Postal Service. So please, if you can receive e-mail, help us reduce costs by sending a note to <MCDHH@mcdhh.state.mo.us> and telling us that it is OK to send you our newsletter by e-mail.

Pat Adams Leaves the BCI

After many years of service, Pat Adams has submitted his resignation from the Board for Certification of Interpreters. We extend our heartfelt "thanks" to Pat for his service on the BCI, and wish him the best as he looks forward to possibly a few more hours of relaxing, painting, and fishing!



2003 MCDHH Legislative Priorities

MCDHH held a Legislative Forum in conjunction with the 2002 Statewide Interpreters Conference, and at that forum deaf and hard of hearing consumers were asked to help set the legislative priorities for MCDHH in 2003. As a result of that forum, we are pleased to announce the legislative initiatives that we are working on during the current legislative session.

- (1) Amend the law to put J88 information in the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System database of the Highway Patrol. Then, if the owner has put J88 on their drivers license, officers will know when they stop a car if the owner is deaf or hard of hearing and uses alternative communication.
- (2) Enact a law to require that American Sign Language be treated the same as any "foreign language" in all educational institutions in Missouri. (HB 310)
- (3) Amend the law (494.425(5) RSMo) that disqualifies a person from sitting on a petit or grand jury if they are "unable to read, speak and understand the English language" so as to allow blind persons who can't "read" and deaf persons who can't "speak" to serve on such juries with auxiliary aids and services. (HB 500) (SB 605)
- (4) Enact a law to mandate hearing aid coverage for dependent children by all insurance companies and HMO's doing business in Missouri. (HB 282) (SB 274)

Advocates who want to see any of these bills passed into law are urged to contact their local representative and senator and request their support of these bills.

Mark Your Calendar! 2003 MCDHH Major Events

June 14 – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day will be held at **Six Flags** near St. Louis. Please join us for this annual fun-in-the-sun frolic, and help us celebrate the 10th anniversary of this event.

September 27 – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day will be held at **Silver Dollar City** near Branson. Spread the word; bring your neighbors; relax and enjoy a fun-filled fall day in the beautiful Ozarks.

(Organizations wanting to exhibit at our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Days should contact Kandice Allee <kallee@mcdhh.state.mo.us>.)

October 17 - 19 – This year's **Missouri Statewide Interpreters Conference** will be held at **Tan-Tar-A Resort Golf Club and Spa** in Osage Beach, and we promise something special for our 10th anniversary conference.

October 18 – The 2003 **Empowerment Symposium** for deaf and hard of hearing people again will be held in conjunction with the Interpreters Conference at **Tan-Tar-A Resort Golf Club and Spa** in Osage Beach.

New MCDHH Brochure Available

The last job needing to be done in the change over from the "Missouri Commission for the Deaf" to the "Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing" was to revise the tri-fold brochure that describes this agency and its services. We are happy to announce that this final transition task is now complete, and copies of the new MCDHH brochure are now available.



Goodbye Old Friend

Steve Hamerdinger, former Director of the Office of Deaf and Linguistic Support Services, has left Missouri and accepted a position with the Department of Mental Health in Alabama. It is with a lump in our throat that we bid "farewell" to Steve, as he has been a tremendous advocate for the rights of deaf and hard of hearing people during his time in Missouri. He will be missed!

2002 Missouri Statewide Interpreters Conference

The 2002 Missouri Statewide Interpreters Conference is now over, and by all accounts it was quite favorably received. We are pleased to report that we again had more than 600 people attend all or part of the conference this year. We had twenty-eight exhibitors at the conference, which set an all-time record. The program was packed with many relevant workshops for professional interpreters. Gary Sanderson did an outstanding job as our keynote speaker, as did Steve Hamerdinger with his endnote speech. We had an especially competent group of presenters at this year's Empowerment Symposium program, and we added a Legislative Forum to the weekend activities. The setting was beautiful, as

It is with deep appreciation that we say to all of you, "Thanks" for giving of your time, expertise and energy...

we again enjoyed lovely fall weather at Lake of the Ozarks. The opportunities for renewing

old friendships and making new ones were many. All in all, it was an extremely successful conference, and an excellent opportunity for interpreters to network and maintain or upgrade their professional skills. The success of the conference was reflected in the evaluations that were returned, with 73% of the evaluated items being rated higher in 2002 than in 2001.

Needless to say, any such conference is the end result of the combined efforts of many dedicated, knowledgeable and talented individuals. Our conference would not have been the success that it was without the hard work of the presenters, working interpreters, CART provider, exhibitors, planning committee members, student volunteers, hospitality room hosts, Tan-Tar-A Resort staff, sponsors, advertisers members of the MCDHH staff, and attendees. Thus, it is with deep appreciation that we say to all of you, "Thanks" for giving of your time, expertise and energy so as to make the 9th annual Missouri Statewide Interpreters Conference such an outstanding success.

New MICS Certification Cards

2003 has ushered in a "new look" for interpreters certified in the Missouri Interpreter Certification System. The old, laminated, green certification cards are being replaced by new, white, plastic cards that look much like credit cards. The new cards look more professional, are more durable than the old cards, and will allow us to better utilize information in our interpreters database through bar coding on the cards. Given the change to annually renewable certifications, the new cards will show the year for which the certification is valid, and will only be issued to interpreters who have their CEUs up to date. If an interpreter has not submitted their CEU information for 2002, they need to contact the MICS coordinator Amy Fowler, <afowler@mcdhh.state.mo.us>, and do that before they can obtain their new 2003 MICS certification card.



Farewell Helen. We'll Miss You!

Commissioner Helen Bayer has recently resigned from MCDHH after six years of valued service. Helen was appointed to the Commission on December 20, 1996 as the representative of local school administration, and felt she should resign given that she had retired from working in the public schools. With deep appreciation for Helen's many past contributions to the Commission, the staff at MCDHH bids Helen a "Fond Farewell." Here's hoping you enjoy your retirement years.

Skill Level Standards Become Mandatory Soon

In 1997, the original administrative rules were developed that implemented the Missouri Interpreter Certification and Licensure law. Those rules included a "Requisite Skills Rule" that outlined in detail the level of certification that was appropriate for providing interpreting services in different settings. However, it was understood back then that most interpreters would need some time to enhance their skills sufficiently in order to work in the most demanding settings. So, the "Requisite Skill Levels" rule was not scheduled to become effective until July 1, 2003. Clearly six years was enough time for interpreters to adapt to the requirement of certification and licensing, and to develop their skills to the highest level possible.

In 2002 the "Requisite Skill Levels" rule was renamed the "Skill Level Standards" rule, and the date when it was to become effective was kept at July 1, 2003. This year the State Committee of Interpreters amended their Ethical Rules of Conduct (4 CSR 232-3.010) to include a section that states "An interpreter shall not interpret in a setting beyond his or her certification level, as provided for in 5 CSR 100-200.170," which is the "Skill Level Standards" rule of MCDHH.

So, starting July 1, 2003 a complaint may be filed with the State Committee against an interpreter who practices in settings for which they are not qualified as specified in the "Skill Level Standards" rule of the Missouri Interpreter Certification System. Anyone who needs a copy of the "Skill Level Standards" rule should contact the MICS Coordinator, Ms. Amy Fowler, at the MCDHH office <afowler@mcdhh.state.mo.us>.

MCDHH Becomes EIPA Test Site

MCDHH is collaborating with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in an effort to ensure that all educational interpreters are appropriately certified and licensed. As a part of that process, MCDHH developed additional certification options for educational interpreters when the MICS rules were revised last year. Since last March, educational interpreters have had the option to take the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA) and have their EIPA certifications converted to MICS certifications. While these additional certification options have been favorably received by many interpreters, they have been underutilized because of the need to travel to Omaha, Nebraska, in order to take the EIPA. We are pleased to announce that making that long trip is no longer necessary. MCDHH has recently arranged to become a remote test site for the EIPA, and effective immediately interpreters wanting to take the EIPA can do so in our office in Jefferson City. For more information about the EIPA contact Amy Fowler, the MICS Coordinator <afowler@mcdhh.state.mo.us>.



*Kevin Williams, Amy Fowler and Dr. Roy Miller
Reach Agreement for MCDHH to Become EIPA Test Site*

Volunteers Needed

When HB 1783 became law last summer, it created a new MCDHH Administrative Fund. That fund allows MCDHH to accept gifts, donations, and grants to help fund special projects that MCDHH would like to initiate. With that in mind, MCDHH is extremely interested in developing some grant applications in the near future, but is very limited in the amount of staff time that can be dedicated to foundation research and proposal writing. Thus, we are asking for the volunteer assistance of any persons who have skills or experience in areas such as grant writing, corporate development, revenue enhancement, or foundation funding. If you feel you might be able to contribute to the fundraising efforts of MCDHH, please contact the executive director <ExecDir@mcdhh.state.mo.us> and discuss the matter.

MCDHH 2002 Award Recipients

The MCDHH 2002 Awards Ceremony was held on Saturday, October 19, at Tan-Tar-A Resort and Spa in conjunction with the annual Statewide Interpreters Conference. At that ceremony several people were honored for their contributions to the programs of MCDHH. Those individuals were as follows:

Hearing Evaluator of the Year — Kevin M. Babin (Nixa)
Deaf Evaluator of the Year — Steve De Shetler (St. Louis)
MCDHH Employee of the Year — Executive Secretary Mary Sheridan (Fulton)
MCDHH Angel Award — Representative Jenee' Lowe (Kansas City)
MCDHH Angel Award — Representative Danie Moore (Fulton)

In addition, five people were presented with MCDHH Lifetime Achievement Awards. Those awards are given to individuals who have devoted many years of service to people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Those recipients were as follows:

Joseph F. Carrico (Chesterfield) Jean Galloway (St. Joseph) Richard D. Reed (Fulton)
Georgetta Graybill (Kansas City) Charlotte Rose Hamilton (Fulton)

An entire newsletter could be devoted to detailing the many contributions of all of the 2002 award recipients, but space will not allow that. For more information concerning the activities of these award recipients, you can visit the MCDHH website <www.mcdhh.state.mo.us>. Our deepest gratitude and sincere congratulations are extended to all of our 2002 award recipients!

"Current Relay Issues" Series

MCDHH and Relay Missouri collaborated last fall on a series of public awareness meetings concerning "Current Relay Issues." Open meetings were held in St. Louis (9/20/02), Springfield (10/2/02), St. Joseph (11/15/02) and Kansas City (11/16/02). At each meeting Matt Gwynn, Account Manager for Relay Missouri, discussed two new services that are offered by Relay Missouri, namely, Video Relay Missouri <www.movrs.com> and Internet Relay <www.sprintrelayonline.com>. Then Kim Davis, the MCDHH Workshop/Training Specialist, talked about the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and how to file complaints about relay services. Then Dr. Roy Miller, Executive Director of MCDHH, discussed the Relay Missouri Advisory Committee (RMAC) and how consumers can help determine what services are actually offered by Relay Missouri.

This is an important year for relay services in Missouri because the contract for providing those services is up for bid again. Anyone who has complaints about the current services of Relay Missouri, or suggestions of new services that need to be added in Missouri, should contact either Leslie Hall, RMAC Chair <lhall74974@aol.com> or Dr. Roy Miller, RMAC member <remiller@mcdhh.state.mo.us>.

Improved New Calendars on MCDHH Website

In our continuing efforts to improve our website, we have recently redesigned two of the sections of our website. First, what was previously called the "Missouri Coming Events Bulletin Board" has been renamed the "Calendar of Missouri Coming Events." Second, what was previously the "MICS CEU Approved Workshops Calendar" has been split into two separate calendars — the "Calendar of Workshops/Presentations Approved for MICS CEUs" and the "Calendar of College Courses Approved for MICS CEUs." Last, the format of all the calendars has been changed. The new calendar format gives brief descriptive information for each event on the calendar itself, and allows the user to scroll through the entire month rather than having to open separate web pages for each day of the month. Please visit our website (www.mcdhh.state.mo.us) and let us know how you like our new calendar sections.

Welcome Aboard to Our Newest Commissioner

Recently the MCDHH staff was informed by the Governor's office of the appointment of Mr. Jason Curry to the Commission. Mr. Curry was born profoundly deaf in Sedalia, Missouri. He attended pre-school at the Children's Therapy Center in Sedalia, and later was mainstreamed in Sedalia public schools with the aid of interpreters. He was the first deaf student to graduate from Central Missouri State University, where he received a degree in Business Administration and Marketing. Mr. Curry formerly was an agent for the largest insurance company in the United States, and is now employed as a Financial Operations Analyst for the U.S. General Services Administration in Kansas City. He received a cochlear implant in 2000, and says that getting the implant "has been an incredible journey, and it seems never-ending." He also started sComm, Inc., a company that will be developing communication devices that he envisions will enable deaf people to communicate directly face to face with hearing people without the need of an interpreter. More information about Mr. Curry can be found on his website <www.jasoncurry.com>. We are delighted to welcome Mr. Curry to the Commission.

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"J88" Eighteen Months Later

On August 28, 2001, SB 275 became law. Ever since then, Missouri citizens have been able to request that an optional "J88" code be added to their drivers license to indicate that they are deaf or hard of hearing and use alternative communication. MCDHH is pleased to report that during the first eighteen months that this service was available (September, 2001 through February, 2003) a total of 3,049 people had the "J88" code put on their licenses, and there is no noticeable drop-off trend. We are delighted with the use that is being made of this service. The more people with hearing loss who get the "J88" code placed on their license the better, as it will likely result in fewer communication problems with law enforcement officers during highway stops.

Location of "J88" on the License



Wanted: Professionals Who Sign!

The staff at MCDHH is often asked "Do you know of any lawyers in Missouri who sign?" And we have been asked "Do you have a list of psychologists in Missouri who sign?" Similarly, at different times we have received requests to provide the names of doctors, dentists, accountants, audiologists, marriage counselors, chiropractors, optometrists, social workers, veterinarians and funeral directors who have the ability to sign. In fact, we have probably been asked if we know anyone who signs in almost every profession that one could name. With that in mind, we are considering developing a directory of "Missouri Professionals Who Sign." But we can't possibly do that without the assistance of everyone who reads **MCDHH NEWS** (and all of their spouses, friends and kinfolk). If you know of any professional person in the state of Missouri who signs, please send us that person's name, address, phone number and profession (or whatever information you can). Then, on the basis of that feedback, we'll decide if we have enough material to justify trying to compile it and maintain it as a directory.

If you know of any professional person in the state of Missouri who signs...

Call Kim if You Need a Workshop

MCDHH provides presentations and workshops on a variety of topics related to hearing loss, including the mission of MCDHH, the nature of Deaf culture, hearing loss, assistive technology, empowerment of persons with hearing loss, legislative advocacy, American Sign Language, and the legal rights of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. So, if you need a workshop in your area, please contact Kim Davis, the MCDHH Workshop/Training Specialist, by either calling 800-796-6499 or sending e-mail to <kjdavis@mcdhh.state.mo.us>.

Subscribe to *MCDHH-L*

Now that the 2003 legislative session is in full swing, we would like to urge everyone to subscribe to ***MCDHH-L***. This is a listserv that is used for the timely distribution of MCDHH announcements and action alerts. And during a legislative session when things sometimes happen very fast, about the only way to keep up with the activities in the legislature that might affect persons who are deaf or hard of hearing is to subscribe to ***MCDHH-L***. You can do that by sending e-mail to <remiller@mcdhh.state.mo.us> and ask to be subscribed to ***MCDHH-L***.

MCDHH Participates in Career Fair at St. James School

On March 13, MCDHH participated in the Career Fair at St. James R-1 School in St. James, Missouri. Exhibiting at this special event gave MCDHH the opportunity to talk with high school students and inform them about various careers available in the public sector. In particular, we were able to emphasize that there are many occupations available for people who are interested in being of service to persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.



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